Come September 1st is the time to start feeding gradually with an 0-14-10 fertilizer in order to harden the plant for the coming cold weather. Refer to your past issues for information for more ideas to protect your plants against the severe cold in the north Florida area. High banking with dirt is about the best measure but even that is not positive against the severe cold that we had last year. Possibly you have learned a better way to protect your plants than have been suggested and if so try it again.

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CARE AND CULTURE FOR CENTRAL FLORIDA
- Bert Livingston, Garden and Gardeners

Basically, remember that the hibiscus is a sun-loving plant and can't be expected to do its best unless it is situated so that it gets sunlight at least 75 per cent of the day. Principal soil requirement is that it have a well-drained location that has provisions for adequate watering when the weather gets dry. Should you want to provide the most perfect soil condition, correct the area to be used so that it will have a pH of 5.5 to 6.5 before planting especially prized hibiscus plants there.

Good plants will be indicated not so much by height as whether or not they are sturdy, well-cared-for specimens such as you will find at the better nurseries. Remember that a plant on which the price is cheap often will turn out to be a cheap plant.

To mulch hibiscus plants heavily with peat moss or some other material helps keep down weeds and retains soil moisture. But beware of letting mulch touch the plant trunk, as this encourages crown-rot fungus disease.

Scale insects, aphids, thrip, red spider, pumpkin bugs, caterpillars and root-knot caused by nematodes are among the insect enemies of hibiscus. Peri-

odic spraying with a lindane spray material will prevent or control all the insects except scale, red spider, and nematodes.

Parathion and malathion being toxic to hibiscus, scale control is best achieved through the mayonnaise type oil emulsion. But as oil also easily damages hibiscus, it is better to apply the oil at spray strength directly to the branches with a soft brush, rather than spraying it on the foliage. Most of the scale lives on the branches, instead of the foliage, anyhow.

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NOTES FROM THE WEST COAST
- Helen Johnson

With the Hibiscus Shows that we have to look forward to in the fall this year, a special effort should be made by all hibiscus growers, to groom their plants as close to perfection as possible so that the shows will have more and better blooms exhibited and many more blue ribbons awarded.

Ailene Craig gave an excellent article in the last bulletin, advising about fertilizer and care of the plants in general. Since at this time of year the bugs seem most prevalent, careful watching and control of the insects will reward you with better shaped flowers, and flowers free of holes. Both of these will give you a better chance at the tri-color award provided you have lavished tender loving care on your plants in way of lots of water and fertilizer.

Scales and Insects, to Watch for on Hibiscus: Your hibiscus will be attacked mainly by two types of scales, snow scale and the so called turtle-back scale, and one type of insect, aphids and the ever-present grasshopper, the worst offender being the tiny green grasshopper.

Snow scale is a tiny white scale that usually